filled before granting approval for conducting various courses by Education Institutions. These Councils have brought to the notice of the Government some cases of Medical & Dental Colleges having been set up through their do not fulfil the prescribed standards. The Govt. of India have been requesting various State Govts. from time to time not to permit the opening of Medical and Dental Colleges which do not fulfil the minimum standards prescribed by the concerned Councils. There are no provisions in the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956 or in the Dentists Act, 1948 requiring prior permission of the concerned Council before establishing a Medical/Dental College. This lacunae is proposed to be removed by bringing in suitable amendments to both these Acts.

3562. [*Trqnsferred to the* 27th *March,* 1992]

Health service in Kashmir Valley

3563. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that the health services in the Kashmir Valley have come to a standstill ;

(b) whether it is also a fact that PHCs and other health care set ups are non-functional and the people are suffering ; and

(c) what measures are being taken to remedy the situation and to reach the suffering population ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI D. K. THARA DEVI SIDDHARTHA) : (a) to (c) The State Government has informed that the infrastructure of public health services in the valley is working normally and rendering health care services.

Society for Voluntary Action for Family Welfare and Health

3564. SHRI N. E. BALARAM : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to set up a society called "Voluntary Action for Family Welfare and Health" and if so the expenditure envisaged thereon ;

(b) whether there is a need of society and what are the objectives ; and

(c) whether it is advisable to set up a new venture with high financial implications when existing voluntary organisation like the Voluntary Health Association of India and other can be utilized for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI D. K. THARA DEVI SIDDHARTHA) : (a) A proposal to set up a Society called "Voluntary Action for Family Welfare and Health (VAFAH)" is under consideration. Its expenditure levels and other parameters are yet to be decided.

(b) Family Welfare has by and large remained as a Government's programme. For making it a peoples' programme, it is felt that greater number of non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) including Voluntary agencies and grass root level organisations representing the people should come up for implementing this programme. For this purpose a need has been felt for setting up a specific organisation outside the Government which could deal with the NGOs and enjoy the necessary autonomy and flexibility which is not available within the Government. The main objectives of VAFAH are to identify, motivate and promote existing or new NGOs to undertake model schemes to be drawn up by the Society and render

technical, financial and administrative support. It will also undertake training, evaluation and monitoring for proper utilisation of funds by the NGOs.

(c) As a result of increasing demand from the voluntary agencies and NGOs, the question of setting up an independent organisation outside the Government is being pursued.

Its expenditure on establishment will not be high but very limited. The existing voluntary organisations are being used as mother units wherever possible but they have a limited reach. There is at present no organisation dealing with Family Welfare which has an all India coverage.

Qualifications for appointment of Food Inspectors

3565. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM : Will the Minister of Health and Family Welfare be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 542 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 27th November, 1991 and state :

(a) whether it is a fact that CCFS from time to time has recommended other technical qualifications also for the appointment of Food Inspectors which are equally important to curb the social evil of food adulteration ;

(b) whether the recommendations as at (v) above from different educational fields is due to that the technocrates from each such different technical educational fields may use their individual technical skills in coordination with each other to curb the social evil of food adulteration ; and

(c) if so, whether it is not necessary to attract and retain technocrates from each of such different technical educational fields as Food Inspectors in the interest of Public Health ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI D. K. THARA DEVI SIDDHARTHA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Persons possessing any of the qualifications prescribed under Prevention of Food Adulteration Rules, 1955 may be appointed as Food Inspectors.

Blindness by cataract

3566. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that millions of people in the country are blinded by cataract ;

(b) whether Government have conducted any survey in this regard ;

(c) if so, the number of people are there in the country at present who are blinded by cataract ;

(d) whether Government are aware that most such people can regain vision by cataract surgery ; and

(e) if so, what action Government propose to take in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI D. K. THARA DEVI SIDDHARTHA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) As per WHO-NPCB (National Programme for Control of Blindness) Survey 1986-89, there are 18.4656 million cataract blinded cases in the country as per 1981 census.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) (1) The Government of India launched a National Programme for Control of Blindness in the year 1976 which is an ongoing programme in which eye care services are being developed in the peripheral sector